

health care bill we will consider later this week effectively eliminates the popular Medicare Advantage health plans that millions of seniors rely on for medical, vision, and dental care.

In my district, nearly 30,000 seniors are enrolled in one of these plans. The average enrollee saves \$800, they have a lower hospitalization rate, and they report greater satisfaction with their plan. The Congressional Budget Office maintains that these cuts could "lead many plans to limit the benefits they offer, raise their premiums, or withdraw from the program."

There are a total of \$500 billion in cuts to various Medicare programs. I don't think seniors would call reducing their benefits health care reform. I don't think seniors would call cutting home health care, cutting hospice care, cutting nursing home care health care reform. We don't need to destroy Medicare Advantage to reform health care.

This week, Republicans will offer a simpler, better proposal which offers real health care reform without taking benefits away from our Nation's seniors.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister Angela Merkel was in this Hall just a few hours ago. She represents a country where they have had health care security for 126 years. Americans have been waiting for 100 years; and when the Republicans took over the last time, they knocked out Mrs. Clinton's plan and they bragged about it. And for 12 years, they made not one single proposal that they would bring to the floor for a vote. They want the status quo. They like what is going on. And if folks back home like what is going on, stick with them, because they are never going to change anything.

What they say about this is, Not so fast. One hundred years is too fast? Well, they say, But we have something we're just about to bring out here on Thursday. Not so fast, right. Wait until the last minute after all of the debate, and then say, Not so fast. The American people want it done now.

WHO WROTE THIS BILL?

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, we should pay special attention to the sections drafted under the supervision of the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Chairman CHARLIE RANGEL supervised the drafting of 70 pages of this bill, pages 296 through 366. This is the same Congressman under investigation by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct on five separate counts: using official resources to raise money;

problems with apartment leases; undisclosed ownership in Dominican Republic Yacht Club; compliance with the storage rules of the House; and problems with his financial disclosure and income tax.

This bill raises your taxes, but ethics is investigating whether RANGEL paid his. Leaders may respond with two spins: Chairman RANGEL had nothing to do with writing this bill, or, he has no ethics problems.

A 2,000-page bill and a coming manager's amendment that will be a chamber of horrors of special deals, supervised by a Congressman under five separate ethics investigations, that is what we will vote on this week.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. PIERLUISI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Affordable Health Care for America Act. This bill lives up to its name. Most importantly from my perspective, this bill does justice to the 4.4 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories. Too often in the past, the territories have been treated as an afterthought in important legislation. Thanks to the efforts of leadership, that is not the case with this bill.

While the legislation is not perfect, it constitutes a giant step forward. The bill addresses the unprincipled funding disparities that the territories have always faced under Medicaid. It also provides funding to enable Americans of modest means residing in the territories to purchase subsidized coverage through the health insurance exchange. It makes my constituents eligible for the worthy consumer protections established in the bill.

I hope the Senate will follow the House's lead, and I will continue to work with our allies in that Chamber to ensure that their bill treats American citizens in the territories in a fair and just manner.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. WESTMORELAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, if you get dressed in the dark, you are probably going to make some poor clothing choices that will open you to ridicule. Well, the same rule applies when you write bills in the dark.

President Obama said last year that the health care reform negotiations would air on C-SPAN. That way, he said, Americans could see who was fighting for them and who is siding with the special interests.

Based on the President's very own formula, we must assume that the Democrat-only, closed-door dealmaking on health care must have put the special interests at the fore-

front. It appears certain that one of those special interests at the table behind the closed doors was the trial attorneys. Maybe that is why the negotiations were secret. They can claim attorney-client confidentiality.

But those trial attorneys must have charged by the hour, because the Democrats gave them quite the payoff in this legislation. This bill will override States' malpractice reform laws and it will prevent States from capping attorneys' fees or damage rewards.

Isn't it ironic that it was President Obama who warned us that this would happen.

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REPUBLICAN PARTY IS ON THE WRONG SIDE

(Mr. RYAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans controlled this Chamber from 1993 until 2006, they controlled the Presidency until 2008; and now, 11 months into a national health care debate, they are just figuring out that we have a health care crisis in this country. How long will it take them to shake the grip of the insurance industry before they even come up with a realistic plan?

Let's look at what our friends on the other side of the aisle are going to vote against. They're going to vote against us increasing the age to 27 where kids can stay on their parents' insurance. They're going to vote against citizens of the United States not being denied health care coverage because of a pre-existing condition. They're going to vote against us saying that no one in America will ever go bankrupt again because of a health care catastrophe in their family. That's what they are going to vote against.

It's very simple: once again the Republican Party is going to be on the wrong side of the vote, on the wrong side of health care reform, and on the wrong side of history.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. ALEXANDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3962 states in section 1 that the legislation builds on what's broken in today's health care system and repairs at the same time. I agree that improvements need to be made in the existing health care system, but placing individuals under one umbrella doesn't build on what's working or repair what's not.

The bill includes a government-run public option that cuts Medicare and Medicare Advantage programs and raises taxes on middle class families. In addition, the bill does not protect the interests of small business, nor